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HEARTS of GOLD

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Being chronicles of Heroism in Canadian History

HEARTS OF GOLD

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HEARTS *of* GOLD

Being Chronicles of Heroism in Canadian History

Published by the
Ontario Women's Liberal Association

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The entire proceeds of the sale of this book will go to Patriotic work for our heroes of to-day.

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Foreword

To all who love the story of a brave deed, and to all who love our own fair land, Greeting:

THIS little book is for you—something to keep your spirit young.

It contains eight prize poems which have appeared in the Christmas numbers of the Toronto "Globe" during the past few years.

These poems deal with events connected with the early history of Canada.

Those by-gone days were rich in adventure, chivalry and daring.

The history oı them is a thing of splendid reality, and fragrant romance.

Out of the Old time grows the New; and these tales of a heroic past have a place in the heart of to-day.

They are a part of our Canadian literature, and all things Canadian are ours.

Let "Hearts of Gold" therefore find a place with us for the sake of the land we love.

Her hills are singing to the skies,
The wild-flowers deck her virgin sod,
So much of nature in her lies
She must be near to nature's God.

JEAN BLEWETT

158060

The Battle of Lundy's Lane

1908

By Duncan Campbell Scott

1852.—Rufus Gale speaks:

YES,—in the Lincoln Militia,—in the war of eighteen-twelve;
Many's the day I've had since then to dig and delve—
But those are the years I remember as the brightest years of all,
When we left the plow in the furrow to follow the bugle's call.
Why, even our son Abner wanted to fight with the men!
"Don't you go, d'ye hear, sir!"—I was angry with him then.
"Stay with your mother!" I said, and he looked so old and grim—
He was just sixteen that April—I couldn't believe it was him;
But I didn't think—I was off—and we met the foe again,
Five thousand strong and ready, at the hill of Lundy's Lane.
There as the night came on we fought them from six to nine,
Whenever they broke our line we broke their line,
They took our guns and we won them again, and around the levels
Where the hill sloped up—with the Eighty-ninth,—we fought like [devils
Until with its very fierceness the fight grew slack.

It was then about nine and dark as a miser's pocket,
When up came Hercules Scott's brigade swift as a rocket,
And charged,—and the flashes sprang in the dark like a lion's eyes,
The night was full of fire-groans, and cheers, and cries;
Then through the sound and the fury another sound broke in—
The roar of a great old duck-gun shattered the rest of the din;
It took two minutes to charge it and another to set it free.
Every time I heard it an angel spoke to me;
Yes, the minute I heard it I felt the strangest tide
Flow in my vein like lightning, as if, there, by my side,

Was the very spirit of Valor. But 'twas dark—you couldn't see—
And the one who was firing the duck-gun fell against me
And slid down to the clover, and lay there still;
Something went through me—piercing—with a strange, swift thrill;
The noise fell away into silence, and I heard as clear as thunder
The long, slow roar of Niagara; O the wonder
Of that deep sound. But again the battle broke
And the foe, driven before us desperately stroke upon stroke,
Left the field to his master, and sullenly down the road
Sounded the boom of his guns, trailing the heavy load
Of his wounded men and his shattered flags, sullen and slow,
Setting fire in his rage to Bridgewater mills, and the glow
Flared in the distant forest. We rested as we could,
And for a while I slept in the dark of a maple wood:
But when the clouds in the east were red all over,
I came back there to the place we made the stand in the clover;
For my heart was heavy then with a strange, deep pain,
As I thought of the glorious fight, and again and again
I remembered the valiant spirit and the piercing thrill;
But I knew it all when I reached the top of the hill,—
For there, there with the blood on his dear, brave head,
There on the hill in the clover lay our Abner—dead!—

No—thank you—no, I don't need it; I'm solid as granite rock,
But every time that I tell it I feel the old, cold shock.
I'm eighty-one my next birthday—do you breed such fellows now?
There he lay with the dawn cooling his broad, fair brow.
That was no dawn for him; and there was the old duck-gun
That many and many's the time,—just for the fun,
We together, alone, would take to the hickory rise,
And bring home more wild pigeons than ever you saw with your eyes.
Up with Hercules Scott's brigade, just as it came on night—
He was the angel beside me in the thickest of the fight—
Wrote a note to his mother—he said, "I've got to go,
Mother; what would home be under the heel of the foe!"
Oh! she never slept a wink, she would rise and walk the floor;
She'd say this over and over, "I knew it all before!"
I'd try to speak of the glory to give her a little joy.
"What is the glory to me when I want my boy, my boy!"

She'd say, and she'd wring her hands—her hair grew white as snow—
And I'd argue with her up and down, to and fro,
Of how she had mothered a hero, and his was a glorious fate,
Better than years of grubbing to gather an estate.
Sometimes I'd put it this way: "If God was to say to me now
'Take him back as he once was helping you with the plow,'
I'd say, 'No, God, thank You, kindly; 'twas You that he obeyed:
You told him to fight, and he fought, and he wasn't afraid;
You wanted to prove him in battle, You sent him to Lundy's Lane.
'Tis well!" But she would only answer over and over again,
"Give me back my Abner—give me back my son!"

It was so all through the winter until the spring had begun,
And the crocus was up in the dooryard, and the drift by the fence was thinned,
And the sap drip—dropped from the branches wounded by the wind,
And the whole earth smelled like a flower,—then she came to me one night—
"Rufus!" she said, with a sob in her throat,—"Rufus, you're right."
I hadn't cried till then, not a tear—but then I was torn in two—
There—it's all right—my eyes don't see as they used to do!

But O the joy of that battle—it was worth the whole of life,
You felt immortal in action with the rapture of the strife,
There in the dark by the river, with the flashes by fire before,
Running and crashing along, there in the dark, and the roar
Of the guns, and the shrilling cheers, and the knowledge that filled your heart
That there was a victory making and you must do your part.
But—there's his grave in the orchard where the headstone glimmers white;
We could see it, we thought, from our window even on the darkest night;
It is set there for a sign that what one lad could do
Would be done by a hundred hundred lads whose hearts were stout and true.
And when in the time of trial you hear the recreant say,
Shooting his coward lips at us, "You shall have had your day;
For all your state and glory shall pass like a cloudy wrack,

And here some other flag shall fly where flew the Union Jack,"—
Why, tell him a hundred thousand men would spring from these sleepy farms,
To tie that flag in its ancient place with the sinews of their arms;
And if they doubt you and put you to scorn, why you can make it plain,
With the tale of the gallant Lincoln men and the fight at Lundy's Lane.

NOTE:—Lundy's Lane was a historic battle of the campaign of 1814. It was fought on July 25 on a road now in the City of Niagara Falls, Ont., between an American force under first General Scott and then General Jacob Brown, and a British and Canadian force under General Riall. The fight continued into the night and resulted with little gain to either side. The British, however, took the ground upon which the fight took place.

1907

Marguerite de Roberval

By Isabel Ecclestone Mackay

O THE long days and nights! The days that bring
No sunshine that my shrinking soul can bear,
The nights that soothe not. All the airs of France,
Soft and sun-steeped, that once were breath of life,
Now stir no magic in me. I could weep—
Yet can I never weep—to see the land
That is my land no more! For where the soul
Doth dwell and the heart linger, there
Alone can be the native land, and I have left
Behind me one small spot of barren earth
That is my hold on heav'n!

You bid me tell
My story? That were hard. I have no art
And all my words have long been lost amid
The greater silences. The birds—they knew
My grief, nor did I feel the need of speech
To make my woe articulate to the wind!
If my tale halts, know 'tis the want of words
And not the want of truth.

'Twas long, you say?
Yes, yet at first it seemed not long. We watched
The ship recede, nor vexed them with a prayer.
Was not his arm about me? Did he not
Stoop low to whisper in my tingling ear?
The little Demon-island was our world,
So all the world was ours—no brighter sphere

That swung into our ken in purple heaven
Was half so fair a world! We were content.
Was he not mine? And I (he whispered this)
The only woman on love's continent!
How can I tell my story? Would you care
To hear of those first days? I cannot speak
Of them—they lie asleep so soft within
My heart a word would wake them? I'll not speak that
word!

There came at last a golden day
When in my arms I held mine own first-born,
And my new world held three. And then I knew,
Mid joy so great, a passion of despair!
I knew our isle was barren, girt with foam
And torn with awful storm. I knew the cold,
The bitter, cruel cold! My tender babe,
What love could keep him warm? Beside my couch
Pale famine knelt with outstretched, greedy hand,
To snatch my treasure from me. Ah, I knew,
I knew what fear was then!

We fought it back,
That ghost of chill despair. He whom I loved
Fought bravely, as a man must fight who sees
His wife and child defenceless. But I knew—
E'en from the first—the unequal strife would prove
Too long, the fear too keen! It wore his strength
And in his eyes there grew the look of one
Who grapples time, and will not let it go,
Yet feels it slipping, slipping—

Ah, my dear!
I saw you die, and could not help or save—
Knowing myself to be the awful care
That weighed thee to thy grave!

The world held two
Now—one so frail and small, and one made strong
By love and weak by fear. That little life!
It trembled in my arms like some small flame
Of candle in a stealthy draught that blows

And blows again—one never knows from whence,
Yet feareth always—till at last, at last,
A darkness falls! So came the dark to me—
And it was night indeed!

Beside my love
I laid my lovely babe. And all fear fled;
For where joy is there only can fear be.
They fear not who have nothing left to fear!
. . . . . .
So that is all my tale. I lived, I live
And shall live on, no doubt. The changeful sky
Is blue in France, and I am young—think you
I am still young! Though joy has come and passed
And I am gazing after with dull eyes!

One day there came a sail. It drew near
And found me on my island, all alone—
That island that had once held all the world—
They succored me and brought me back again
To sunny France, and here I falter through
This halting tale of mine. And now 'tis told
I pray you speak of it no more!

If I would sleep o' nights my ears must close
To that sad sound of waves upon the beach,
To that sad sound of wind that waileth so!
To visions of the sun upon the sea
And green, grass-covered mounds, bleak, bleak, but still
With early flowers clustering here and there!

NOTE:—When the Sieur de Roberval, appointed Viceroy of Canada by Francis I., sailed for his new possessions, he took with him his niece, the lovely and high-spirited Marguerite de Roberval. A cavalier of Picardy, who loved her, but was too poor to ask her hand in marriage, joined the company as a volunteer, but on the voyage out the affection of the young people was discovered by de Roberval, who was so enraged that he devised a terrible punishment. Near Newfoundland was a solitary island, called the Isle of Demons, because of the strange wailings of the wind over the rocks, and here Marguerite was abandoned. Her lover, however, succeeded in escaping his guards, and swam to shore. They built such shelter as they could, and this is the first European family home of which we know in Canada. After some years Marguerite was rescued by a fishing boat and restored to France, but not until both husband and child were dead. The poem contains her story, told by herself, upon her arrival in France.

Brébeuf and Lalemant

1913

By Alan Sullivan

CAME Jean Brébeuf from Rennes, in Normandy,
To preach the written word in Sainte Marie—
The Ajax of the Jesuit enterprise:
Huge, dominant and bold—augustly wise.
The zealot's flame deep in the hot brown eyes
That glowed with strange and holy whisperings,
And searched the stars, and caught angelic wings
Beating through visions of mysterious things.
Once, in the sky, a cross and martyr's crown
Hung o'er the squalor of the Huron town.
And spectres, armed with javelin and sword,
Foreshadowed the dread army of the Lord;
But, onward through the forest, to his fate
Marched the great priest, unawed by Huron hate:
In every scourge he glimpsed the sacred Tree
And the dear Master of his embassy.

'Twas in St. Louis, where the Hurons lay,
Screened from the blue sweep of the Georgian Bay,
That the frail brother Lalemant, and Brébeuf,
Built a strange sanctuary, whose trembling wall
Was birchen bark, on whose long, curving roof
Lay tawny skins. A spirit seemed to call
In supplication through the holy place
For some strong mercy on the untamed race
That, naked, sat in this thrice wondrous room;
And, peering through the incense-burdened gloom,

Stared at the altar, where the black-robes bent
O'er the bright vessels of their sacrament.

Till, on the grim and memorable day,
When, to the Host, they bade their converts pray,
There flashed a gasping runner through the wood:
"The Iroquois! The Iroquois!" he cried.
As fire that stings the forest into blood
And drives red gales of ruin far and wide,
So frenzied fear ran riot, in a flood
That surged convulsive. But the great priest stood
Like a strong tower, when fretted billows race
Tumultuously about its massy base:
"Courage, my children, through the flame I see
The dear white Christ, whose long sought sons are ye."

Then suddenly from out the wood there rose
The shouting of innumerable foes,
And waves of painted warriors from the glade
Swept, yelping, through the tottering palisade.
Were devils ere so murderous as men
In whose brown breasts those devils breathed again,
When agony the shuddering sky assailed,
When age and youth in choking anguish wailed?
Torn from the breast, the child was cleft in twain,
The mother shrieked, then fell among the slain;
Age had no power to swerve the dripping knife,
Youth gained but torture as the end of life,
The wounded perished in the bursting flame
That left St. Louis but a woeful name.
But 'midst the dead and dying moved the priest,
Closing dead eyes, speeding the soul released;
"*Absolvo te*"—to trembling lips the word
Descended from the Hurons' new found Lord.
And, ere the night took pity on the dead,
Brébeuf and Lalemant in chains were led;
And one, the giant of Normandy, was bound
To a great stake; when staring boldly round
With ardent gaze, he saw the convert throng

Captive. "Have courage! It will not be long;
Torture is but salvation's earthly price.
To-day we meet the Christ in Paradise."

O heart of iron, O strange supernal zeal,
That braves the fire, the torture and the steel!
O torn and shrinking flesh that yet can find
The crown of thorns mysteriously entwined!
O sightless orbs that still their Lord discern,
Howe'er the coals their blackened sockets burn.

Thus sped the Jesuit's triumphant soul.
And Lalement, ere the rising of the sun,
Achieved through torment his far-shining goal.
And all the Huron missions, one by one,
Were driven by the Iroquois like spray
That strong winds snatch and swiftly whirl away.

Sleep, Lalemant! Brébeuf, a long surcease!
Still moves your martyr's spirit through the glade;
Still mourns the northern forest, when the peace
And benediction of the twilight shade
Awakens in the dark memorial pines
A velvet-footed, cedar-scented breeze,
That whispers where the green and knotted vines
Enmesh the cloistered colonnade of trees.

NOTE:—There exists no more fascinating record of courage and endurance than that bequeathed to Canada by the Jesuit Fathers. It excites both our pride and our wonder. Foremost in the van of these great pioneers came Brébeuf and Lalemant, the first Canadian martyrs. Who can read without emotion of their dauntless lives, their marvellous and perilous journeys, and the terrible death that overtook them in 1649, when captured by the merciless Iroquois on the shores of Lake Huron?

Wolfe at Louisbourg

By Mrs. Logie Macdonnell

FIERCE pounds the surf against the crag to-night;
(Up and follow, brothers, when he calls.)
The sullen fog lies thickly on the sight;
The fortress laughs up there in our despite;
One narrow strip of sand, and breakers left and right,
But Wolfe is calling. Follow when he calls.

The ambushed guns have launched their deadly roar;
(Steady, brothers, follow where he leads.)
The narrow strip of sand runs red with gore;
Through splintered planks the mocking waters pour;
'Tis ours to flee to safety or drive to death ashore;
But not a man will fail him now at need.

Five ugly teeth grin black upon our lee,
(Pull like madmen, brothers, weal or woe.)
Grim teeth that crunch their prey with horrid glee;
The red wave gulfs us, fighting hand and knee.
God only knows if ever more we'll see our village quay,
But if we follow Wolfe we'll see the foe.

The Flag is flying o'er the forest steep.
(Nor more calling, brothers. Rest you now.)
England's task is finished; rest and sleep.
He'll call us when there's other corn to reap,
And we'll follow him to glory or join those in the deep,
But no one calls to-day, so rest you now.

NOTE:—The taking of Louisbourg was the first of General James Wolfe's great accomplishments in what is now Canada. On June 8 he effected a landing at Freshwater Cove in the face of a large French force. He afterwards played the leading part in the siege and capture of the French fortress. He fell at Quebec in 1759 in the Battle of the Plains of Abraham, which decided the fate of Canada.

1909

Laura Secord

By Fred Jacob

THOUGH I have told the story till my thoughts
Flow like a mountain echo that repeats
Unchanged the phrases which have gone before,
The day still half eludes my memory,
Returning fitfully as does a dream
That haunts the waking hours and will not be
Formed into words. Across the stretch of years
Comes back the recollection of those weeks—
The ravished homesteads of Niagara,
Where women waited watching the infirm;
The ceaseless dread of battle and of death;
The rumors and the slowly spreading news;
The tending of the wounded friend and foe;
And then the night when an unguarded tongue
Told of the plan to crush the band of men
Whose valor blocked the strong invaders' path.
All through the darkness loomed the single thought
Of warning my devoted countrymen,
For well I knew that I, alone, could go.

Like long, slow waves upon a sandy beach,
The rose-hued dawn flowed up from cloud to cloud:
The maples on the height were color-strewn,
But in the hollows night was brooding still.
As 'mid the tearful columbine I turned
To see once more the nests beneath the eaves,
And all the clustered vines about the door,

The birds awoke. Deep in the thicket's hedge
A robin whistled blithely, and would pause
Only to swell his throat with shriller joy.
Then, like an answer to the call of morn,
A sentry's challenge from the roadway rang;
My trembling voice would scarcely make reply,
But he saluted, speaking jestingly
Of those who in the war had luck enough
To find a sickbed and a careful nurse,
The while their comrades, drenched with chilly dew,
Counted at night the weary hours away,
And turned from me to watch a bird that toiled
Across the marshland, calling plaintively:
While I sped on, until beyond his sight
I left the highway for the trackless wood.

Oh! how I feared to face the tangled way
I knew was safest. All the brushwood seemed
To crouch and watch me. If a leaf but stirred
I saw within the gloomy depths the light
Of gleaming eyes; and when a catbird wailed
Among the pine trees, round my heart I felt
A sudden clutch and all my pulses throbbed
Like hammers beating on a molten brain.
Between the hills the clods of sodden earth
Cringed 'neath my feet; there rank thick grasses lay
Heavy with too much rain, a matted heap,
And as I passed, a sudden frightened snake
Glided away and in the reeds was gone.
Sullen beneath the root-veined dripping banks
The torrent swept, as some great monster moves
That waits in strength the coming of its prey.
There where a giant tree stretched across the stream
I climbed with trembling arms, and when I gazed
Into the muddy, white-flecked depths below
The slimy mosses gave within my hands.
And green-tipped branches crushed beneath my weight
Until I dragged, half-fainting, up the steep,
And heard the thwarted waters leap and rage,
Then fall and swirl in eddies on their way.

At length my thoughts became a numb, dim dream,
And still I sped, but oh! my weary feet
Seemed weighted with the marsh. I only knew
The warning that I bore must reach its goal;
These were the words with which I made my strength
Whene'er I feared I could not stagger on.
And though the banks were clamoring with flowers,
I knew their presence as one feels at night
That all the hedges down the lane are white
With sweet-breathed bloom of May. Onward I trailed,
A heaviness which ever seemed to grow—
Even the breezes' pressure held me back—
Until I topped a height, and on the slope
That spread before me saw a little band
Of strange fantastic men who, with a rush
Like demons, hemmed me in. I faltered not.
It was as though my aching brain were dulled
And glutted with the terrors I had passed,
So to the circling Indians I cried
Their Captain's name. Waiting no further word,
They bore me onward.

To my ears there came
A rushing sound of voices; round me forms
Floated like shades, until there spoke a man
Whose words each rang out sharp as a command.
Afar I heard a voice, thin as the pipe
Of some tired bird after a sun-scorched day,
Or like the whisper of a spirit passed
Into the silence, that still tried to breathe
A word of comfort for the stricken home.
I marked it struggle full of weariness,
But fail not till the story had been told
Of danger and the coming of the foe.
Then as I swayed and stretched out clutching hands,
I knew that distant, toneless voice was mine.

NOTE:—Laura Secord's name is cherished for her heroic service in apprising the British and Canadian troops under Lieut. Fitzgibbon of the approach of an American force under Col. Boerstler. For this purpose, on a steaming day in June, 1813, she walked from Queenston to Beaver Dams, (now Thorold), over ten miles, through a tangle of unbroken forest, guiding her steps by the aid of the sun.

The Passing of Cadieux

1910

By Isabel Ecclestone Mackay

THAT man is brave who at the nod of fate
Will lay his life a willing offering down,
That they who loved him may know length of days;
May stay awhile upon this pleasant earth
Drinking its gladness and its vigor in,
Though he himself lie silent evermore,
Dead to the gentle calling of the Spring,
Dead to the warmth of Summer; wrapt in dream
So deep, so far, that never dreamer yet
Has waked to tell his dream. Men there may be
Who, careless of its worth, toss life away,
A counter in some feverish game of chance,
Or, stranger yet, will sell it day by day
For toys to play with; but a man who knows
The love of life and holds it dear and good,
Prizing each moment, yet will let it go
That others still may keep the precious thing—
He is the truly brave!

This did Cadieux,
A man who loved the wild and held each day
A gift from Le Bon Dieu to fill with joy
And offer back again to Him who gave.
(See, now, Messieurs, his grave!) We hold it dear
The story you have heard—but no? 'Tis strange,
For we all know the story of Cadieux!
He was a Frenchman born. One of an age

That glitters like a gem in history yet,
The Golden Age of France! 'Twould seem, Messieurs,
That every country has a Golden Age?—
Ah well, ah well!—

But this Cadieux, he came
No one knew whence, nor cared, indeed, to know.
His simple coming seemed to bring the day,
So strong was he, so gallant and so gay—
A maker of sweet songs; with voice so clear
'Twas like the call of early-soaring bird
Hymning the sunrise; so at least 'twould seem
Mehwatta thought—the slim Algonquin girl
Whose shy black eyes the singer loved to praise.
She taught him all the soft full-throated words
With which the Indian warriors woo their brides,
And he taught her the dainty phrase of France
And made her little songs of love, like this:

"Fresh is love in May
When the Spring is yearning,
Life is but a lay,
Love is quick in learning.

"Sweet is love in June:
All the roses blowing
Whisper 'neath the moon
Secrets for love's knowing.

"Sweet is love alway
When life burns to embers,
Hearts keep warm for aye
With what love remembers!"

Their wigwam rose beside the Calumet
Where the great waters thunder day and night
And dawn chased dawn away in gay content.
Then it so chanced, when many moons were spent,
The brave Cadieux and his brown brothers rose
To gather up their wealth of furs for trade;
And in that moment Fate upraised her hand

And, wantonly, loosed Death upon the trail,
Red death and terrible—the Iroquois!
(Oh, the long cry that rent the startled dawn!)
One way alone remained, if they would live—
The Calumet, the cataract—perchance
The good Saint Anne might help!

"In God's name, go!
Push off the great canoe, Mehwatta, go!—
Adieu, petite Mehwatta! Keep good cheer.
Say thou a prayer; beseech the good Saint Anne!—
For two must stay behind to hold the way,
And shall thy husband fail in time of need?
And would Mehwatta's eyes behold him shamed?—
Adieu!"—Oh, swift the waters bear them on!
Now the good God be merciful! . . . . .

. . . . . They stayed,
Cadieux and one Algonquin, and they played
With a bewildered foe, as children play,
Crying "Lo, here am I!" and then "Lo, here!" "Lo, there!"
Their muskets spoke from everywhere at once—
So swift they ran behind the friendly trees,
They seemed a host with Death for General—
And the fierce foe fell back.

But ere they went
Their winged vengeance found the Algonquin's heart.
Cadieux was left alone!

Ah, now, brave soul,
Began the harder part! To wander through
The waking woods, stern hunger for a guide;
To see new life and know that he must die;
To hear the Spring and know she breathed "Adieu"!
. . . One wonders what strange songs the forest heard?
What poignant cry rose to the lonely skies
To die in music somewhere far above
Or fall in sweetness back upon the earth—
The requiem of that singer of sweet songs!

They found him—so—with cross upon his heart,
His cold hand fast upon this last Complaint—

"Ends the long trail—at sunset I must die!
I sing no more—O little bird, sing on
And flash bright wing against a brighter sky!

"Sing to my Dear, as once I used to sing;
Say that I guarded love and kept the faith—
Fly to her, little bird, on swifter wing.

"The world slips by, the sun drops down to-night—
Sweet Mary, comfort me, and let it be
Thy arms that hold me when I wake to light!"

NOTE:—In the early days there came to the region of the Upper Ottawa —to Allumette and Calumet—a voyager by the name of Cadieux. He was more than an ordinary adventurer, for not only could he fight and hunt with the most expert, but he could make sweet songs, words and music, and sing them, too, in a way that was good to hear. So thought, at any rate, a pretty Indian maiden of the Algonquin Ottawas, whom he won for his wife. Their wigwam stood near to the Great Fall of the Calumet. After the season's hunting Cadieux and his Indian friends were preparing to go to Montreal with their accumulation of furs, when, of a sudden, the alarm was given of the approach, through the woods, of a war party of their deadly enemies, the Iroquois. There was but one means of escape. The canoe was to be committed to the cataract, while someone remained to hold the Iroquois at bay. Cadieux and a single Algonquin remained. The Iroquois finally withdrew, but not before the Algonquin was killed. Cadieux, left alone, wandered for a time in the woods until he became exhausted, returning at last to Petit-Rocher, and, feeling his end approach, he made for himself a grave, and set up a rustic cross to sanctify his departure. His friends, returning to search for him, found him in his grave, partly covered with leaves and branches, the cross beside him, and his hands closed on his last song, "La Complainte-de Cadieux."

The Lament is still sung by the French-Canadians, and the grave of Cadieux is still an object of veneration.

Madeleine Verchères

By Alan Sullivan

'Twixt the stream and forest tall,
Seven leagues from Montreal
Lay Verchères. The yellow harvest shook its golden-bearded head.
"Pioneers, come, cut and bind me," every nodding tassel said,
Till the reapers sought the grain;
Scythe and sickle swing amain
In the clear autumnal weather; left the fortress all unguarded,
Left the blockhouse without watcher and the bastions unwarded—
Maid and matron labored there
For the harvest of Verchères.

Ran a whispered word that day,
Where the silent redmen lay
Peering through the screen of branches at the reapers and the grain:
Iroquois, athirst for carnage, from the fastness of Champlain.
And the Indian yell arose
As they leaped upon their foes,
Till the clear autumnal noonday saw the death-blow flash and fall
Fierce on man and maid and matron—heard the hoarse triumphant [call—
Not a reaper did they spare
For the harvest of Verchères.

From the stricken fields a cry
Reached the fortress: "It is I,
Madeleine. Oh, haste ye, haste ye! Arm! The Iroquois are here!
And the grain is red with slaughter and their feet are drawing near.
I have seen a hundred foemen—
Tho' the half of us be women,

We will fight them for our country—we will fight them to the end,
And the Lord is God of battle—He will help us to defend,
He will strengthen us to dare."
Thus spoke Madeleine Verchères.

Swift and stormy fell the gloom
O'er the silent fields of doom,
And there came a sound of marching from the bristling palisade,
Where a tiny squadron followed on the footsteps of the maid:
Age and youth arose to fight
In the horror of the night;
And the hands that gripped the musket feeble were, and very tender,
For the children grew to warriors, and a girl was the defender
When the redmen came to stare
At the fortress of Verchères.

Still and starless crept the hours
Where the slaughtered kissed the flowers
Strewn amid the beaten harvest. In the shadows lay the foe,
Heard the sentries fling their challenge, heard the footsteps come and [go;
Till the firm, unceasing tramp
Sounded like an armed camp,
And the muskets' sudden flashing stabbed the darkened air with red
Like a quick and angry question—an imperious voice that said:
"Death is crouching everywhere
On the bastions of Verchères."

Hour by hour the watch was kept,
Night by night the challenge leapt,
For the sword of France was naked and the soul of France beat high,
And the redmen shrank from battle as the days went drifting by;
While the glint of weapons broke
From beneath each army cloak,
As the women paced the ramparts with a martial step and steady,
With the gaze of hooded falcons, with the musket priming ready,
As a password to declare
The defiance of Verchères.

Vengeful, thro' the forest glade,
Came La Monnerei to aid,

And the foemen slipped like shadows to the fastness of Champlain
Ere he saw the dead men lying in the field of beaten grain:
Ere he saw the sentries stand
At a word of quick command,
Where the flag of France still bourgeoned on the parapeted wall,
And the guarded gate swung open and he heard a maiden call:
"Sir, into your stronger care
Take the fortress of Verchères."

Search the long historic page
Of our country. Age by age
Read of valor's blazoned tribute, mark each monumental stone,
Add the countless host of heroes who have smiled at death—alone—
Who have left us not a name
We can honor and proclaim:
Then in humbleness and pride at the treasure-house of glory
Carve another name beside, deep engrave another story
Of a maiden young and fair—
Dauntless Madeleine Verchères!

NOTE:—The story of the heroism of Mary Madeleine de Verchères is one that will always live in Canadian history. It is concerned with the early history of old Lower Canada when all civilized life was centred along the St. Lawrence. Madeleine Verchères was born in the fort of her father's seigniory, 20 miles below Montreal. In the autumn of 1692 a band of Indians raided the settlement, killing the settlers in the fields. Racing back to the fort she managed to close the gates before the Indians arrived and then with the assistance of two soldiers, an old man and her two little brothers, she kept the Indians at bay for eight days. The fort was then relieved by a body of soldiers from Montreal.

Brock

By Fred Jacob

WATCHING amid the driving rain,
While still the storm cast darker shade
Upon the darkness, we could hear
The guns mock heaven's cannonade,
And send the warning call again
Down to the distant fort where Brock
Had waited long for this attack.
We knew that morn would bring the shock,
And we must bear the foeman back:
'Twas then we tasted fear—
The fear of men who had not known
The brunt of war. The dreaded thing
Loomed o'er us, leaderless, alone.
It was not peril that dismayed,
But of ourselves we stood afraid;
We knew not what the day might bring.

At dawn the rocky height which lay
Above us broke the fog and cloud,
That lifted like a sable shroud,
Caught by the dripping hand of day.
We saw old Queenston's wind-torn steep,
Whose summit held the sun's pale gleam;
We saw the foam-flecked river sweep
Against the boats that crossed the stream;
We saw our comrades guard the space
Above the landing-place.

We heard sharp hoof-beats. From the way
That led down to Fort George he came
Into our midst. We cheered his name,
"Sir Isaac Brock!"
We were no longer men at bay.
Then from the broken heaps of rock
Above our heads flashed jets of flame:
The foes were on the height.
A gallant few had dared to climb
The pathway wet with moss and slime
And choked with tangled vines and grass,
Where fishermen could barely pass
Ere summer's growth had blocked the way.
Their flag was flaunting in our sight,
Planted as though entrenched to stay.

His order reached us firm and clear,
And we would follow him though death
Rained from the bushes. Standing still
A moment, we surveyed the slope.
Our beating pulses seemed to fill
Our ears with sound—it was not fear.
Each soldier caught his eager breath,
And felt the throbbing call of hope.
Straining as though the danger lay
Only behind us, with a rush
We leaped up through the underbrush,
For we had heard our leader say,
"York Volunteers, on, on!"
All thought that we might fail was gone;
His voice had kindled us anew,
Giving fresh strength to heart and arm;
We cared not where the bullets flew—
Their whistle did not speak of harm,
For we had work to do.

Gone! once again we were alone,
Borne onward like the wind-blown hail,
And he had fallen. With a moan
He staggered to his knees, and we

Could not return to aid, or see
The light beneath his eyelids fail,
Or hear the words he gasped in pain
For those he ne'er would meet again,
Who waited for him far away,
Weary with watching day by day.

He fell, and all seemed blotted out.
Would valor he had wakened go?
Would victory be turned to rout?
That day of battle answered, No.
His mighty spirit lingered still;
It urged us forward up the hill
Each time we charged, a ranging flood
Of men who mourned a hero slain.
His presence was with us again
When we began the slow retreat,
Plodding our way with aching feet
Through miles of swamp until we swept
Down on the panic-stricken foe.
Our Indians avenged his blood,
But we, who knew the goal was won
And that the work he planned was done,
Moved with a deadly silence when
We hurled our solid line of men
Across the space and cleared the height.
And like a curtain fell the night.

Yet in the triumph we still kept
A thought of him. We learned to know
His code of war, his honor pure,
His call to act and to endure;
And through the darkest months they stayed
Among us to inspire and aid;
Until at times I saw him stand,
A figure guarding our fair land.

NOTE:—Sir Isaac Brock, the hero of the war of 1812, fell on October 13, 1812, at Queenston Heights, in which battle he led the British troops, who, inspired by his leadership, won the battle after his fall. He was born in the island of Guernsey in 1769 and entered the army in 1784. He came to Canada in 1802 with the rank of Lieut.-Colonel. In 1810 he was commissioned as Lieut.-Governor of Upper Canada. A magnificent monument stands to his memory on the battle-field on which he lost his life.

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